

the former to the Church of the elect as foreknown in Christ, according as *He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world*; the latter to its militant members in probation bidden to make their *calling and election sure*.

Eph. i. 4.

2 Peter i.

10.

Uses.

4. It will be hereafter seen that all these several correlative terms have their uses; that the peculiarities of Romanist and Calvinistic and other errors have much to do with their perversion; and that therefore a precise valuation of their meaning is important, both to the theologian and to the preacher. Meanwhile, the fitness with which each blessing surrounds the whole estate and conditions of the believer's life shows that the covenant salvation is but one in its diversity.

DIVERSITY IN UNITY.

Diversity.

We have no better illustration of the unity which reigns in the diversity than is to be found in the diversity itself. There are no saving benefits conferred in the Christian covenant which are not connected with one or other of the three terms: Righteousness, Sonship, Sanctification. Synonyms are found of each in considerable numbers; but these are the governing formulary words, which rule respectively over wide spheres of Evangelical phraseology. While each embraces the entire estate of personal religion, and provides to present every man faultless in Christ in its own domain, they are as distinct in themselves as the terms imply; belonging respectively to the Judicial Court, the Household, and the Temple of Christianity.

1. **RIGHTEOUSNESS** presides over the Gospel as administered in the Mediatorial Court. There God is the Righteous Judge: Christ is the Mediator of a covenant of forgiveness, having offered an atonement in which the idea of satisfaction to Divine justice as the guardian of law is prominent, and in virtue of which He, as the Righteous One, is an Advocate. In that court the ungodly and the sinner appear in their special character as condemned by the law. Repentance there is simply conviction of sin and confession. There the sentence of forgiveness, or remission of penalty, and justification, or acceptance as righteous for Christ's sake, is pronounced. And the witness of the Spirit is the declaration to

Righteousness

the conscience of pardon : giving the absolved sinner to feel that there is no condemnation. That court also demands the guarantee on behalf of everyone who is absolved that in him shall be fulfilled the righteousness of the law. All that the New Testament says concerning righteousness, throughout the whole of the stern family of terms belonging to it, is consistent with the great idea that the Gospel is administered in a court of supreme, rigid, exacting and perfect justice. Righteousness is written on its doorposts, behind its Judge, and everywhere. The two ideas of imputation and impartation are inextricably interwoven ; and make the everlasting distinction between this tribunal and every human figure of it. All is judicial from beginning to end. None of the terms we have been using can be transferred, strictly speaking, to either of the other departments. To sum up : the God who presides is only a Judge : He does not pardon as a Ruler and justify as a Judge ; there is no sovereign act apart from the judicial. Both in this world, and at the threshold of eternity, the Gospel is a judicial economy.

Sonship.

II. SONSHIP is the centre of the Christian privileges which belong to the filial relation of believers to the Father in Christ. Here the whole terminology changes. The people of God are a family, in a House where the Redeemer is the Elder Brother, the Firstborn among many brethren, the Mediator of a covenant of reconciliation rather than satisfaction. The sinner is admitted as a prodigal : his regeneration is the new life given by the Spirit of Christ, and his adoption is his reinstatement in all the privileges of the household of God. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of adoption : His testimony being internal, not so much spoken to us as spoken in us, witnessing together with our regenerate spirits and enabling us to call God Father. There no law reigns save the law of internal love ; and the perfection of the Christian character is that more abundant life from which sin in act and in root has vanished. Its blessing is the filial blessing ; its holiness is the imitation of the Firstborn ; its food is the life of Christ pledged in the sacramental feast. It is the central and the supreme department of Christian privilege : of which alone it is said that we were predestined to be conformed to the Image of the Son.

III. SANCTIFICATION is the blessing imparted to believers as they are admitted into the presence and service of the God of holiness in His temple. The sinner here seeks entrance as defiled and inwardly corrupt. In the Christian temple the Saviour is the High Priest, and owns no other name. He is the Mediator of a covenant ratified now, not by satisfaction nor by reconciling love, but by an expiatory sacrifice. The sprinkling of His blood removes the bar to acceptance on the altar, and the witnessing Spirit impresses the silent seal of consecration, which is His own personal indwelling in the unity of the Father and the Son. This blessing is the deliverance of the soul from all that is contrary to the pure service of God in His shrine. Perfection is here entire sanctification. The love which in the Court is the fulfilment of law, and in the House conformity with the Living law and image of the Beloved Son, is here the spring and energy of entire consecration.

Sancti-
fication.

Now it needs no proof that all these blessings are really one under different aspects. The sinner absolved in the Court is by the same act received in the Family and consecrated in the Temple. The Judge, the Father, and the God are One. The Advocate, the Son, the High Priest are One. The penitent who stands at the bar, who is met as a prodigal at the door, who approaches the altar of consecration with only defilement in the soul which he comes to give back to God, is one and the same penitent. The Spirit Who witnesses to the conscience, with the spirit, and as a seal ON or IN the heart, is One Spirit. The perfection of each is the same perfection; and the door of each opens into the eternal Presence of God.

Unity in
Diversity.